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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, January 16

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 17, 2008

09:31

Attended the year's first tea ceremony at the Urasenke Tokyo studio in Ichigaya, along with former Prime Ministers Mori and Abe.

10:59

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Met at the Kantei the special envoy of South Korean President-elect Lee Myung Bak.

13:57

Attended an LDP national secretaries' general meeting at party headquarters.

14:37

Met at the Kantei the foreign ministers of five Southeast Asian and Mekong countries, followed by Economic and Fiscal Policy Minister Ota and others. Ota stayed on.

15:38

Attended an LDP joint national convention of the youth and women's divisions at party headquarters.

16:03

Met at the Kantei Fuji Xerox advisor and New Japan-China Friendship Committee for the 21st Century Japanese Chair Yotaro Kobayashi and others, followed by private secretary to the foreign minister Kawano.

17:05

Met Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Masuda and Administrative Management Bureau Director General Hashiguchi. Afterward, attended a Security Council of Japan meeting, followed by an ad hoc cabinet meeting.

17:48

Met Vice METI Minister Kitahata, followed by former LDP Secretary General Nakagawa.

20:04

Returned to his official residence.

4) Cabinet OKs MSDF masterplan

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 17, 2008

The government yesterday evening adopted a masterplan at a Security Council meeting and an ad hoc cabinet meeting for the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission to be resumed in the Indian Ocean under a special measures law promulgated and enforced yesterday. Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda approved the masterplan for MSDF activities. Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba is expected to issue orders on Jan. 17 to send an MSDF squadron.

The MSDF will ready the Oumi, a supply ship, and the Murasame, a destroyer escort. The two MSDF vessels will head out next week and arrive in the Indian Ocean in about three weeks. The MSDF will resume refueling activities and water supply in mid-February for foreign naval vessels engaging in maritime interdiction operations to back up antiterror operations in Afghanistan. The MSDF, based on

the masterplan, will send a total crew of up to 500. The MSDF squadron will be staged in the Indian Ocean up until the end of June.

5) "New refueling law unimportant": Ozawa

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
January 17, 2008

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The Diet enacted a new antiterrorism special measures law (new refueling law) in a second vote of the House of Representatives on Jan. 11. That day, Ichiro Ozawa, president of the leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto), left his seat in the lower chamber right before the vote. "I had promised to go to Osaka Prefecture to back a candidate running in the gubernatorial election," Ozawa said in a news conference yesterday after his party's convention. "A campaign promise must not be broken. I don't think the new refueling law is important for the people and the DPJ." So saying, Ozawa indicated that there was no problem.

"If I think it's an important bill," Ozawa went on, "I will be there before doing anything else." Even so, Ozawa stressed: "We're going to take office. That's my role as the head of a political party. My role has priorities." In addition, Ozawa told reporters: "The prime minister and cabinet ministers do not attend every plenary session. Nevertheless, they are not criticized at all. I cannot understand this at all. I'm far busier. If you criticize me, you should criticize both of them, as well."

6) DPJ President Ozawa: I offer no apology for abstaining from voting on new antiterrorism bill because supporting campaign was more important

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
January 17, 2008

When asked by reporters about his having left the plenary session on Jan. 11 of the House of Representatives where the ruling parties passed the new antiterrorism special measures bill by a two-third majority override vote, he responded yesterday: "As party head, not as a politician, I have more important matters to deal with." He indicated in his remark that he felt no need to offer an apology. Since Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama has repeatedly apologized for Ozawa's act, there are noticeable differences in attitudes toward the matter between the two DPJ executives.

Explaining that the reason for his abstention from voting was to support the DPJ-backed candidate's campaign in the Osaka gubernatorial election, he stressed: "It was committed from before to support the campaign. I could not break my election promise." Asked about the new antiterrorism special measures law, he stated:

"It was not an important bill for the public and the DPJ. I had already expressed my opposition to the bill. The aim of the plenary session was to just to count numbers. We could predict the result. I cannot understand why you criticize me."

Asked about the fact that the DPJ had required its legislators to attend the plenary session, Ozawa said: "As party head, I make my own priorities about my own duties." He argued:

"I cannot understand that the prime minister and cabinet ministers are allowed to absent themselves from plenary sessions because of official duties, but I am not allowed. I am busier than them and I have a more significant role than them."

In a meeting yesterday in Kyoto, however, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Secretary General Bunmei Ibuki criticized Ozawa's abstention from voting, saying: "Those who serve for national politics should put in every effort in order to give the public the assurance of

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relief and security."

7) Ozawa at party convention vows to stake his political life on bringing about change in government, with eye on winning majority in next Lower House election

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
January 17, 2008

The major opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) held yesterday a regular party convention at the Pacifico Yokohama in the city of Yokohama. In the session, President Ichiro Ozawa expressed his determination to stake his political life on bringing about a change of government through the next House of Representatives election. But he is under criticism for skipping a vote in a Lower House plenary session that readopted the government-sponsored antiterrorism special measures bill. His strategy to enlist greater public support remains unclear.

Touching on the next regular Diet session to be convened tomorrow, Ozawa declared in his speech:

"Defining the upcoming session of the Diet as the session to lower gasoline prices, we will demonstrate activities in the Diet to abolish the provisional gasoline tax rates, while securing resources for local road projects. I promise you that I will devote myself to winning the next political battle. I also pledge that I will stake my political life on achieving two political goals: Bringing about a change in government through a general election this year in order to implement our livelihood-oriented policy, and enrooting parliamentary democracy in Japan. It is going to be my last battle as a politician."

In a press conference after the convention, he also said about the victory-or-defeat line: "If the opposition bloc fails to win a majority, such would mean a defeat."

8) DPJ President Ozawa: Aim is to gain majority of Lower House seats by opposition parties in next election

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
January 17, 2008

Referring in a speech delivered at the annual convention held yesterday afternoon in Yokohama to the next House of Representatives election, Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) President Ichiro Ozawa expressed his determination:

"I promise to stake my political career on taking over the reins of government. It will be the final battle for me as a politician. All the DPJ members as one body will win the political battle in cooperation with other opposition parties."

At a press conference after the convention, Ozawa gave a low threshold for victory:

"The best result would be that the DPJ alone holds a majority of the Lower House, but the aim is to have a majority by opposition parties. If that cannot be achieved, it will mean a defeat."

Considering the next regular Diet session, which will open tomorrow and will focus on gasoline prices, Ozawa underscored a policy of

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abolishing the provisional tax rates. He clearly stated: "I think there is no possibility for holding consultations with the government and ruling parties on this issue."

9) Is Ozawa all right?

MAIHICHI (Page 2) (Abridged slightly)
January 17, 2008

By Masao Yora, editorial writer

Immediately after the Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ or Minshuto)

overwhelming victory in last summer's House of Councillors election, I wrote in this column: "Above all, it is unclear if DPJ President Ichiro Ozawa is aiming at becoming the prime minister."

The DPJ confirmed in its party convention yesterday that it will aim at an Ozawa administration. But doubts again crept into my mind as I watched Ozawa leave the Jan. 11 House of Representatives plenary session before it took a vote to readopt the government-sponsored new antiterrorism special measures legislation in order for him to stump for the DPJ candidate running in the Osaka gubernatorial race.

An election comes ahead of an historical vote. Reportedly, some DPJ members had feared from days before that Ozawa might skip the vote. He could have delayed the time to leave for Osaka. Ozawa seemingly wants to say that he has no reason to be criticized by the media. But Ozawa is a person who might become the prime minister. In my view, it was his responsibility to send a clear message to the people that day. An increasing number of people are having doubts about Japan's decision to resume the refueling operation in the Indian Ocean. Ozawa is to blame for making such people wonder, "What was this Diet all about?"

Some observers think that Ozawa deliberately avoided the vote in order to secure a free hand with an eye to forming a grand coalition in the future. If that is true, the rebellious act by the party head is even more serious.

Ozawa will reportedly not take the floor to question the government in the next regular Diet session. Although his obsession to bring about a change in government is clear, Ozawa seems to be thinking that he is cut out for doing the spadework behind the scenes rather than for becoming the prime minister.

At one point in the past, the Liberal Democratic Party discussed selecting different persons as the prime minister and the LDP president. By the same token, I believe the DPJ could have a separate prime ministerial candidate and party president.

10) Draft revealed of Fukuda's policy vision: Stresses cooperation with the opposition camp

SANKEI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
January 17, 2008

This newspaper learned yesterday of the contents of a draft policy statement, the Fukuda Vision, which Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda is not preparing as a set of domestic and foreign policy guidelines to use from now on. The catchphrase in the statement is "building a nation that is independent and can coexist." The draft has such

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statements as "building a nation that is secure and safe," and contains such policy stances as giving diplomatic emphasis to Asia, as well as having a "policy line of cooperation with the opposition parties" in managing the Diet.

The prime minister, after vetting the draft, apparently is considering presenting the vision himself at the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) convention on Jan. 17 and then in his Diet policy speech on the 18th.

The draft was compiled in mid-December last year mainly by former Justice Minister Masatate Sugiura at the National Strategic Headquarters, a body directly under the LDP president. It is organized into five chapters: 1) Diet and administration; 2) Economic society strategy aimed at independence and coexistence; 3) Creating a country in which the culture, traditions, nature, and history are treasured; 4) Building a country that is secure and safe; and 5) foreign relations.

In the chapter on Diet and administration, the draft categorizes the current lopsided upper and lower houses as being "a danger to parliamentary democracy." It stresses a policy line of cooperation with the opposition parties, stating, "There is no other way to break the deadlock other than by straightforward and sincere talks

with the opposition camp on important political items." It categorizes as essential to change the tendency of favoring government-submitted bills, and cited the need to increase bills submitted under political leadership that went along with the will of the people.

11) Meeting with ROK president-elect's special envoy, Prime Minister Fukuda says, "I feel a new age is coming"

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)
January 17, 2008

Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda yesterday met at the Prime Minister's Official Residence with South Korean Special Envoy Lee Sang Deuk, deputy speaker of the National Assembly and South Korean president-elect's elder brother, and conveyed his willingness to attend the inauguration ceremony for the president on Feb. 25. Tokyo is highly hopeful that the new South Korean administration will depart from the Roh Moo Hyun administration's policy line, which has been described as "being anti-Japanese, anti-America, and pro-DPRK," as one former foreign minister put it.

In the talks, Fukuda said, "I have feeling that a new age is coming," and he expressed his hopes for the president-elect. On the North Korean issues, the two confirmed the importance of strengthening the unity of Japan, the United States, and South Korea. Special Envoy Lee noted: "We must not put aside the abduction issue."

Japan is in a mood of welcoming the next South Korean administration. At the beginning of the year, former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, Administrative Vice Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi, and other government officials visited South Korea in succession to coordinate a visit to Japan by the ROK president-elect this spring.

Behind this welcoming mood is Tokyo's sense of relief in part because the president-elect indicates he will attach importance to relations with Japan and also because the period of the Roh

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administration, during which bilateral ties were strained, has come to an end. Unlike President Roh, who fanned the flames of anti-Japanese sentiments over historical issues and the Takeshima (Tokdo in Korean) islands dispute, "the new administration will not clamor at us as the Roh administration had done," a Japanese Foreign Ministry official noted.

However, a senior official explained, "The South Korean public has become pro-North Korea during the tenures of the Kim Dae Jung and Roh administrations." The past presidents of South Korea declared building a "future-oriented relationship" with Japan immediately after they came to power, but later they intensified an anti-Japanese mood. At a press briefing yesterday, Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said, "My impression is that there may

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be a slight difference from the Roh administration," but he added: "We must carefully assess the situation."

12) CIRO employee possibly got several million yen from Russian counterparts in return for info

YOMIURI (Page 39) (Full)
January 17, 2008

A 52-year-old male employee of the Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office (CIRO or Naicho for short), is alleged to have provided the government's in-house information to a 38-year-old second secretary of the Russian Embassy in Japan. In this case, the CIRO employee is suspected of having given information to the second secretary and several intelligence agents from the Russian government, sources revealed. The official is believed to have received money and have been treated to the extent of several million yen in total. The in-house information was excerpted from CIRO reports and other files prepared for the organization to plan key policies. The Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department's Public Security Bureau is

investigating what was contained in the information that went to Russia.

The CIRO employee in question is currently assigned to the administrative section as a researcher and analyst of the domestic political situation, according to MPD Public Security Bureau sources. About 10 years ago, this employee was assigned to an organization affiliated with the Cabinet Office. In those days, he was a researcher and analyst of overseas developments.

The CIRO employee got to know the Russian Embassy second secretary and those Russian intelligence agents at that time through persons he knew, the MPD sources said. The employee used to provide information to them, and in return, received several tens of thousands of yen each time or was wined and dined. Such payoffs are seen to have added up to several million yen.

The employee took out his handwritten transcriptions of CIRO files, including reports on the domestic political situation, according to the sources. He met with his Russian counterparts at restaurants in Tokyo or elsewhere and handed those transcripts to them.

13) LDP's Koga and Tanigaki factions agree on merger in May

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Excerpts)
January 17, 2008

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Election Committee Chairman Makoto

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Koga, who heads an LDP faction, and Policy Research Council Chairman Sadakazu Tanigaki, who also heads another faction, held a meeting yesterday in a Tokyo hotel, in which the two faction heads reached an agreement on a plan to merge their factions by the end of May. They will hold a political fund-raising party on May 15 in Tokyo and announce the inauguration of a new faction.

Koga will head the new faction and Tanigaki will become No. 2 man in it. The new faction will not file a presidential candidate for the time being. The total membership of the new faction will be 61 -- 45 Koga faction members, 14 Tanigaki faction members and Koga and Tanigaki, who now belong to no factions as they serve in LDP leadership posts. The membership of 61 will make the new faction the third-largest faction in the LDP, following the Tsushima faction, which has 68 members.

After the meeting, Koga told reporters: "I want to place importance on our agreement for the LDP and our country's politics." Tanigaki stated: "The two factions share a policy of giving priority to the daily lives of people and to foreign policy toward Asia."

The Koga and Tanigaki factions were derived from the former Miyazawa faction, which also included the Kono group, which left the Miyazawa faction in 1998. The Kono group is now headed by Taro Aso and is called the Aso faction. Moreover, due to the so-called Kato rebellion in 2000, in which Koichi Kato called on then Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori to step down, the Kato faction, which was also derived from the former Miyazawa faction, split into the Ozato faction, currently the Tanigaki faction, and the Horiuchi faction, currently the Koga faction.

14) TSE continues free fall, with Nikkei closing at 13,504 yen: Yen rises sharply, testing 105 yen against dollar

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)
January 17, 2007

The benchmark Nikkei Stock Average on the Tokyo Stock Exchange yesterday fell nearly 500 yen but narrowly avoided crashing through the 13,500 point barrier. In the meantime, the yen rose to 105 against the dollar, the highest level in two years and eight months. Uncertainties about the future of the U.S. economy triggered by the subprime loan issue have spread commotion to markets in many countries. In particular, stock prices are plunging, and the yen is making big gains on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE).

The Nikkei Stock Average ended at 13,504.51 yen, down 468.12 points from the previous day, marking the fourth consecutive decrease. The margin of decline reached 1,094 yen. TOPIX (Tokyo Stock Exchange Stock Price Index), indicating the movement of prices of stocks listed on the First Section of the TSE, was at 1,203.37 yen, down 47.83 points from the previous day. Stock prices fell across the board, with prices of 90 PERCENT of stocks listed on the First Section of the TSE taking a beating. Trading volume stood at 3.02 billion shares.

Meanwhile, the yen exchange on the Tokyo Foreign Exchange Market hit between 106.28 yen and 106.31 yen against the dollar, up 1.3 points from the same time the previous day.

Many market insiders are calling for structural reforms, such as deregulation, and fiscal reconstruction. However, they are

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disappointed at the Fukuda administration, noting that the reform drive has stalled. This is accelerating the sell-off of Japanese stocks.

Moves to withdraw invested money are gathering momentum in stock markets throughout the world. In Asia, indexes in Singapore and Shanghai dipped about 3 PERCENT from the previous day's level. India also saw a 2 PERCENT drop, compared with the previous day. Stock prices in Britain also slid 1.9 PERCENT. Stock prices in Germany temporarily dropped 1.5 PERCENT.

In the past, there have been cases in which Japan-selling brought about lower stock prices and a weaker yen, and an economic recovery caused a higher yen and higher stock prices. This time, however, yen carry trade, in which foreign investors borrow low-interest yen to change it into dollars and invest it in high-interest overseas assets, increased before the yen began to rise. However, judging that the investment risk has increased, those investors are now buying yen in order to pay back the yen loans, thus driving the yen higher.

15) "Impact of subprime loan crisis yet to be determined": Fukuda

YOMIURI (Page 9) (Full)
January 17, 2008

Following the plunge on the Tokyo Stock Exchange yesterday, a number of government officials made statements that the plunge is attributable not to weakness in the Japanese economy but mainly to the subprime loan issue.

Commenting on the growing subprime loan fiasco, Prime Minister Fukuda told reporters at the Prime Minister's Office (Kantei): "We have yet to determine how much impact the issue will have on the future of the Japanese economy. I believe that this situation will continue for some time to come. I want the U.S. to deal with the matter properly." Regarding the falling stock prices, however, he took the view that the falling stock prices do not reflect the Japanese economy.

Some market insiders have pointed out that one reason for the falling stock prices is the Fukuda administration stepping back from the reform drive. However, Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura underscored, "If you tell me which policy of the Fukuda administration has affected stock prices, it would be very helpful."

16) Losses incurred by 21 Japanese, U.S., and European banks from subprime loan fiasco reach 11 trillion yen: 470 billion yen by six Japanese banks

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Full)
January 17, 2008

According to the tally worked out by Yomiuri Shimbun, based on the amounts released by leading 21 Japanese, U.S. and European banks, losses incurred by those banks since last year from nonperforming subprime loans, U.S. housing loan targeting low-income earners,

totalled 107.8 billion dollars or approximately 11.4 trillion yen. Since leading U.S. banks and securities houses will release further calculation results through late January, losses are expected to expand. There is now a strong possibility of losses incurred

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throughout the world amounting to close to 300 billion dollars as projected by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Citigroup, the largest bank in the U.S., sustained the largest loss of 2.86 billion. Its loss had increased from 6.4 billion dollars in the July-September quarter last year to 22.2 billion dollars in the October-December quarter the same year.

Morgan Stanley reported a loss of 1.5 billion dollars in the June-August quarter last year, but the amount increased in the September-November quarter. Its losses are expanding as time goes by. Though the prices of stocks it holds are continuing to fall, the company has been unable to sell them, resulting in a sharp increase in appraisal losses. Among Japanese banks, losses sustained by six companies, including Mizuho Financial Group and Nomura Holdings, totaled approximately 4.5 billion dollars, or 477 billion yen.

17) Government starts coordination to select new BOJ governor, looking at Vice Governor Muto

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
January 17, 2008

The government and the ruling camp yesterday started the process of picking a successor to Bank of Japan (BOJ) Governor Toshihiko Fukui, whose term is to expire on March 19. Diet approval is needed for the appointment of a new BOJ governor, so the government hopes to obtain approval from the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and other opposition parties beforehand. The government has in mind a plan to promote Vice Governor Toshiro Muto, but the opposition bloc opposed his promotion in the spring of 2003. The appointment of a new governor is likely to face roadblocks.

Liberal Democratic Party Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Tadamori Oshima met DPJ Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Kenji Yamaoka at a Tokyo hotel yesterday and exchanged views on who should be picked as the new governor, though he did not cite the name of Muto. The government and the ruling camp plan to present their personnel proposal in a meeting of representatives from both chambers' steering committees as early as early next month.

However, if the House of Councillors, which the opposition camp controls, turns down the government's plan, the post of governor will be left vacant. Last November, appointment plans for three posts, including Transport Council membership, were rejected for the first time in 56 years. Given this, the government may come up with a plan to select someone whose appointment the DPJ is expected to approve, someone other than Muto.

Muto retired from the post of administrative vice finance minister in 2003 and assumed the BOJ vice governorship. Since then, he has been viewed as a likely candidate to succeed Fukui. He supported the governor in an important phase over such policy switches as the removal of money-easing and zero-interest policies. He served as vice finance minister when Prime Minister Fukuda was chief cabinet secretary.

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Financial authorities now find it difficult to steer financial policy in the face of the financial market turmoil, set off by the U.S. subprime loan problem, and growing fears of the slowing down of the global economy. Market players have express hope that the

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experienced Muto will succeed Fukui. If Muto assumes the post of BOJ governor, he will be the first governor with experience in the

Finance Ministry since Yasuo Matsushita in 1994.

18) Whether to refer to numerical targets for emissions cuts in Davos speech left to prime minister's judgment

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
January 17, 2008

Prime Minister Fukuda is scheduled to deliver a speech on Japan's policy on reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the Annual Assembly of the World Economy Forum (Davos Conference) in Switzerland later this month. On the question of whether to include numerical targets in the speech, since views were split at a ministerial meeting to discuss measures to fight global warming held at the Prime Minister's Official Residence yesterday, it was decided to leave the issue to the prime minister's judgment.

In the meeting, Environment Minister Kamoshita said: "I do not mean that we should follow the policy of the European Union, but Japan should clarify at least its country-specific targets." He indicated that Japan should demonstrate its stance of accepting a tougher target than that set in the Kyoto Protocol and aim to introduce a domestic emission-trading system. But Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Amari fiercely reacted to it, contending that Japan's announcement on introducing numerical targets may result in "giving a good excuse for major emitters opposed to reduction obligations, such as the United States and China, and collapsing a new framework." He persisted with the stance of giving top priority to having all major emitters join a post-Kyoto framework.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura said in a press conference after the ministerial meeting: "It is necessary for the government to deal with the issue in unity. We will fully discuss what expression should be used."

19) Government to extend 4.4 billion yen in financial aid to five Mekong countries

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
January 17, 2008

The first Japan-Mekong foreign ministerial was held yesterday at the Foreign Ministry's Iikura Guesthouse in Tokyo's Azabudai between the foreign ministers of Japan, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Cambodia. In the session, the Japanese government announced that it would extend about 40 million dollars (approximately 4.4 billion yen) in financial cooperation for the East-West Corridor expressway project and the 2nd East-West Corridor distribution system improvement project. Japan will contribute the 40 million dollars in a grant aid through the Japan-ASEAN fund.

20) Japan convenes Mekong foreign ministerial with five Southeast Asian countries to counter China

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 17, 2008

Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura held a first Japan-Mekong foreign ministerial meeting with five Southeast Asian countries, including Vietnam and Laos, in Tokyo yesterday. This represents a new

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framework for cooperation between Japan and Southeast Asia. Japan promised to provide the region with non-reimbursable aid totaling 40 million dollars, or approximately 4.4 billion yen, to help it to fight poverty and promote infrastructure construction for distribution of goods. By setting up the new framework, Japan aims to counter China, which is stepping up its diplomatic offensive in Southeast Asia.

Japan proposed the forum in order to support the development of the Mekong region. Thailand, Burma, and Cambodia also took part. Prior to the meeting, Foreign Minister Koumura met Laotian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Thongloun and signed a bilateral investment accord.

According to the chairman's statement issued by Foreign Minister Koumura after the conference, Japan will accept about 10,000 students and trainees over the five years starting in 2008. Japan also promised to increase the amount of its official development aid (ODA) disbursements to the five countries over the next three years.

In the conference, the participants agreed to cooperate in containing infectious diseases like new strains of influenza, terrorism, and drug trafficking. They also confirmed a stance of urging North Korea to resolve the nuclear and abduction issues.

DONOVAN